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Ansted-Higgins Spring Company
Connersville
Fayette County
Indiana

Photographs and
Written and Historical Data

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Ansted-Higgins Spring Company

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Location:	Between Mount and 16th Streets, 200 feet east of Columbia Avenue UTM: 16.6594060.4390410 Quad: Connersville, Indiana
Date of Construction:	1891
Present Owner:	Lew Bohlander
Significance:	Established by E.W. Ansted, the Ansted-Higgins Spring (later the Ansted Spring and Axle) Company, was the first carriage manufacturer attracted to the Connersville Industrial Park. The spring company was the cornerstone of Ansted's automobile manufacturing empire in Connersville.
Historians:	Robert Rosenberg Donald Sackheim

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The Ansted-Higgins Spring Company, established in Connersville, Indiana in 1891, was the cornerstone of the automobile empire created by Edward W. Ansted. The factory, like many of the original companies located in the Connersville Industrial Park, began producing parts for buggies and carriages, but with the advent of the automobile several factories in the industrial park, including the Spring Company, attempted to meet the demands of the new market. Edward Ansted proved to be a successful automobile manufacturer: in addition to the Spring Company, he organized 5 subsidiary companies (see IN-10, 11, 14) to supply various products to his Lexington Motor Company, and it was not until 1924 that the Spring Company factory was sold.

Edward Willard Ansted, the son of a village blacksmith, was born in Clayton, Jefferson County, New York in 1852. Raised in the U.S. and Canada, he first learned the manufacture of carriage springs in Canaquoque, Ontario at the age of 18. Later he moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan and worked there before settling in Racine, Wisconsin in 1882. In Racine, Ansted became foreman of the Racine Spring Works, a local firm which specialized in the manufacture of buggy springs. The company failed in 1884, and formed a partnership with Michael Higgins. They took over management of the factory and reopened it as the Ansted-Higgins Spring Company. In 1889, Ansted moved to Indianapolis and opened a branch factory, while keeping his interest in the Racine company. The Indianapolis branch moved to Connersville in 1891 and two years later, in 1893, the partnership with Higgins was dissolved.

The factory was located along Columbia Avenue just north of Mount Street. The original structure was 180 x 230 feet. In 1895 it was combined with an axle works located north of the main building, and the name was changed to the Ansted Spring and Axle Works.

One of the early products of the Company was the Swan Loop Buggy Spring. It was used by Connersville buggy manufacturers and others throughout the country. Average production for the carriage trade was 1,200 tons per year.

As the automobile usurped the place of the buggy on American roads, the firm turned its attention to the manufacture of automobile springs. Ansted Vehicle Springs were designed for large vehicles and were distributed by the Standard Parts Company.

On 1 November 1924 the firm was sold to Robert H. Doepke of Cincinnati. Doepke changed the name to the Connersville Steel Products Company on 10 September 1926. The building was idle through the Great Depression and was reopened on 6 July 1938 by the Better Connersville Association. The Stant Manufacturing Company bought the building in 1941.

Ansted Higgins Spring Company

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